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who give up all to follow Jesus, will be just as certain to have eternal life and share the blessings of the *parousia*, as it is certain that "Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together."

REV. E. C. GORDON.

Biblical Notes.

Nero Redivivus: Rev. 17: 8-11. The Rev. William E. Barton, tries his hand on this difficult passage in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July. He belongs to the Praeterist School and while agreeing that the beast which was of the seven and is also of an eighth (17: 11) is Nero and Domitian, confesses that no satisfactory scheme has been made out which reconciles this interpretation with the number of the Roman Emperors. His views may be summed up as follows: (1) It is more natural to begin the Emperors with Augustus than with Julius Cæsar; (2) this brings the book in the reign of Galba; (3) Otho and Vitellius whose reigns were very brief are passed over; (4) Vespasian and Titus are counted as one; (5) the eighth is Domitian. The writer who is the seer, looking forward, beholds in the eighth a second Nero. The reference to the current superstition need not imply that John believed it; still it was in a real sense true. As John the Baptist was Elijah, so was Domitian, Nero.

Luke 1: 74, 75. An interesting setting of these verses in the light of historical circumstances is given by Rev. John Reed in the *Expository Times* for September. He says "Zacharias had his own idea of the blessings of the salvation, to be brought to Israel by the "Highest." As a Jew, he shared in the patriotic feelings and hopes of the time. He looked for national independence from the rule of the Romans, and the establishment of a kingdom of Israel, whose glory would eclipse that of any other kingdom. But as a priest, he had a yet dearer hope, of which national independence was only the condition which must precede its fulfilment. The worship of the Temple had often been disturbed by incursions of Roman soldiers. From the tower Antonia, which overlooked the Temple courts, a sleepless watch was kept upon the worshipers. On the slightest appearance of tumult, or suspicion of a plot, the soldiers dashed down among them. On one occasion, at least, the blood of the worshipers was mingled with their sacrifices. The lack of freedom to serve God in His holy house (the verb in 1: 74 means *to render religious service*, cf. Matt. iv. 10; Acts viii. 7; Acts xxiv. 14; Rev. vii. 15) was an indignity hard to endure, and a constant cause of irritation. Never to be free from the fear of interruption; never to be without consciousness of being watched by suspicious Gentile eyes, were the worst sorrow and most bitter grievance of the wise and godly priest. The national degradation had its most shameful indignity in that which touched him as a priest most closely. To him the coming salvation would have as its best blessing, and the sign of all others,

liberty to carry on the worship of God without fear. His song is the true lyric of a priest. It is the expression of deep personal feelings and of intense personal hopes."

The Apocalypse. In the year 1886 a German student named Vischer offered as his thesis a discussion of the composition of the Apocalypse, the boldness and originality of which has won for it wide acceptance. Professor Harnack, to whom it was presented, acknowledged his interest in it in the following generous fashion. We quote from Dr. Martineau's translation in his "Seat of Authority in Religion." "In June last year, the author of the foregoing treatise, then a student in theology at our University, came and told me that in working out the theme prescribed for his department, 'On the theological point of view of the Apocalypse of John,' he had found no way through the problem but by explaining the book as a Jewish Apocalypse with Christian interpolations set in a Christian frame. At first he met with no very gracious reception from me. I had at hand a carefully prepared College Hef, the result of repeated study of the enigmatic book, registering the opinions of a host of interpreters, from Irenæus downwards; but no such hypothesis was to be found among them; and now it came upon me from a very young student, who as yet had made himself master of no commentary, but had only carefully read the book itself. Hence my scepticism was intelligible; but the very first arguments advanced with all modesty, were enough to startle me; and I begged my young friend to come back in a few days, and go more thoroughly with me into his hypothesis. I began to read the Apocalypse with care, from the newly-gained point of view; and it was—I can say no less—as if scales fell from my eyes. After the too familiar labours of interpreters on the riddle of the book, the proffered solution came upon me as the egg of Columbus. One difficulty after another vanished, the further I read; the darkest passages caught a sudden light; all the hypotheses of perplexed interpreters—of 'proleptic visions,' 'historical perspectives,' 'recapitulating method,' 'resting stations,' 'recreative points,' 'unconscious relapse into purely Jewish ideas'—melted away at once; the complex Christology of the book, hitherto a veritable *crux* for every historical critic, resolved itself into simple elements." But this theory is so original and revolutionary as not to commend itself to more sober thinkers. Professor Davidson has said of it, "Such a history of a Jewish Apocalypse is unexampled. Further, there could be no thought of the Apostle John in connection with the book. The authorship of the Presbyter, mentioned by Papias, is a purely modern conjecture. We should have to conclude that the Christian editor gave out the whole with the design that it should be taken for the work of the Apostle John, and that his deception succeeded. This is a strong assumption, considering that the book was probably known to Papias. Again, the Christian editor appears to adopt the Jewish views of the rest of the book, *e. g.* the earthly reign of the saints over the nations (ii. 26 with v. 10, xx. 4). When we take into account the known opinions of Papias, Justin, and Irenæus, and fancy to ourselves the various complexions of faith, the crosses, as we might say, between Judaism and Christianity that must have existed in the earliest times of the Church, we hesitate to admit that a Christian could not have written the whole book. And to mention only one other point: the theory gives no account of the parallelism between the book and our Lord's eschatological discourse."